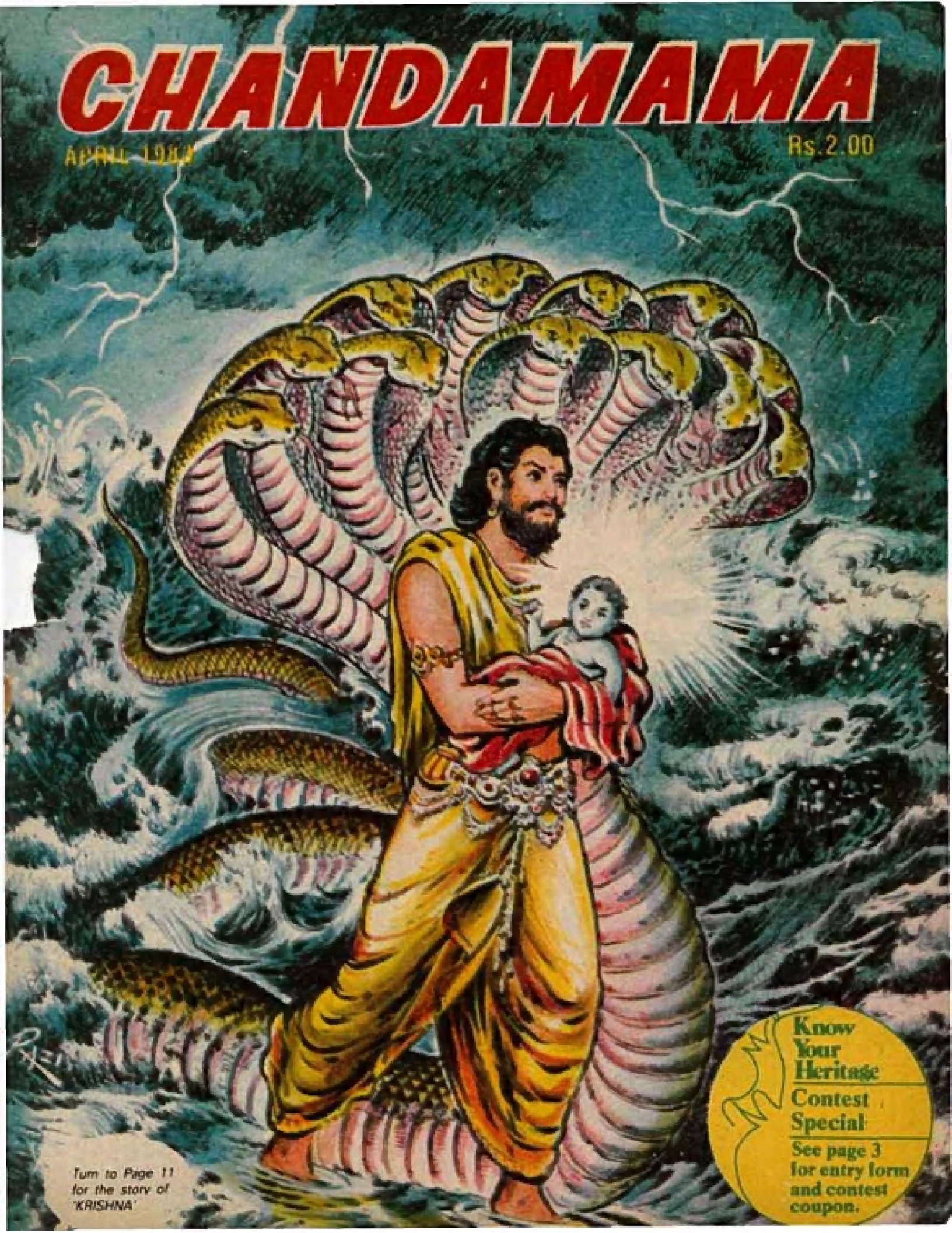


CHANDAMAMA

APRIL 1983

Rs. 2.00



Turn to Page 11
for the story of
'KRISHNA'

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for entry form
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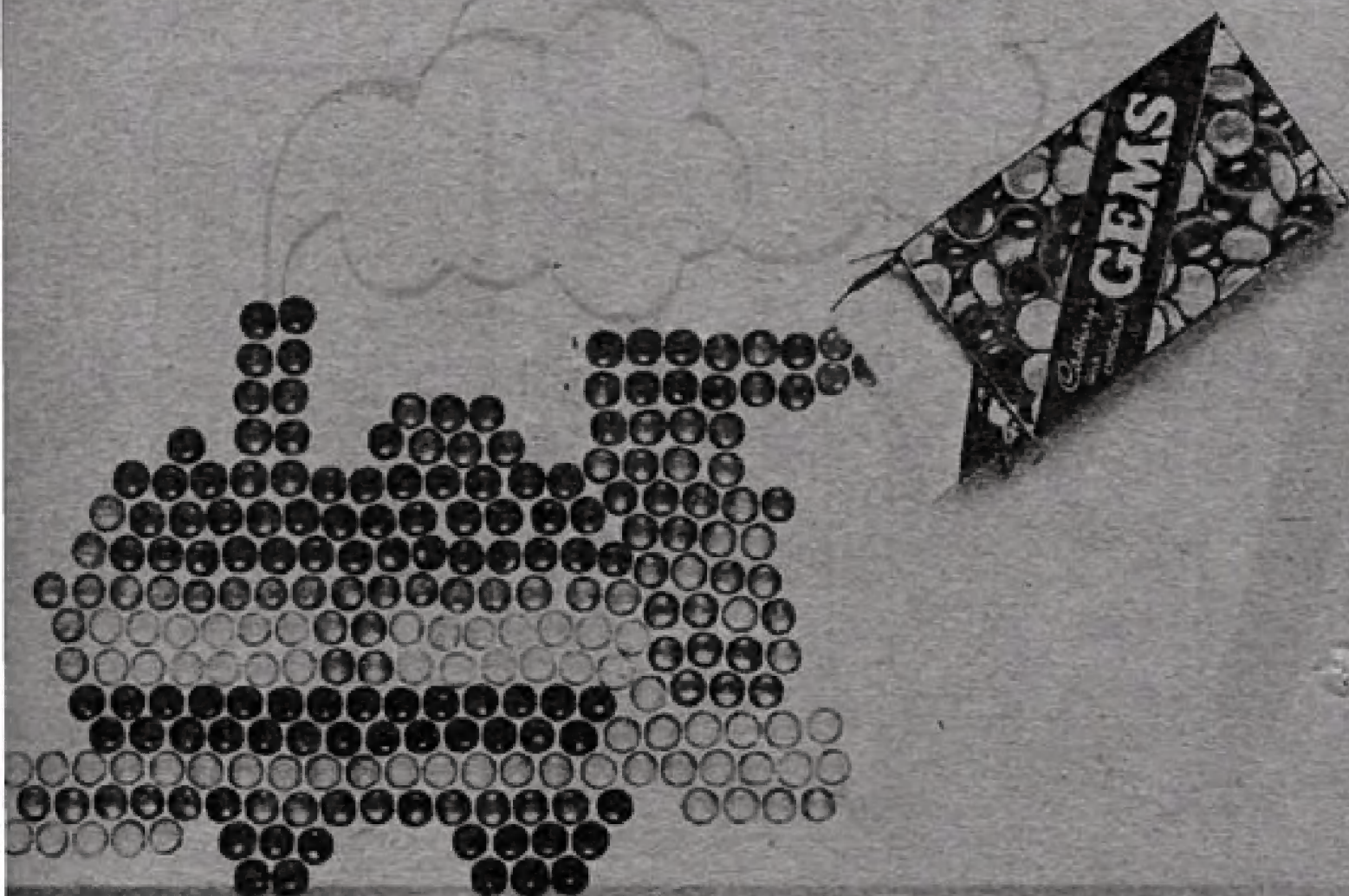
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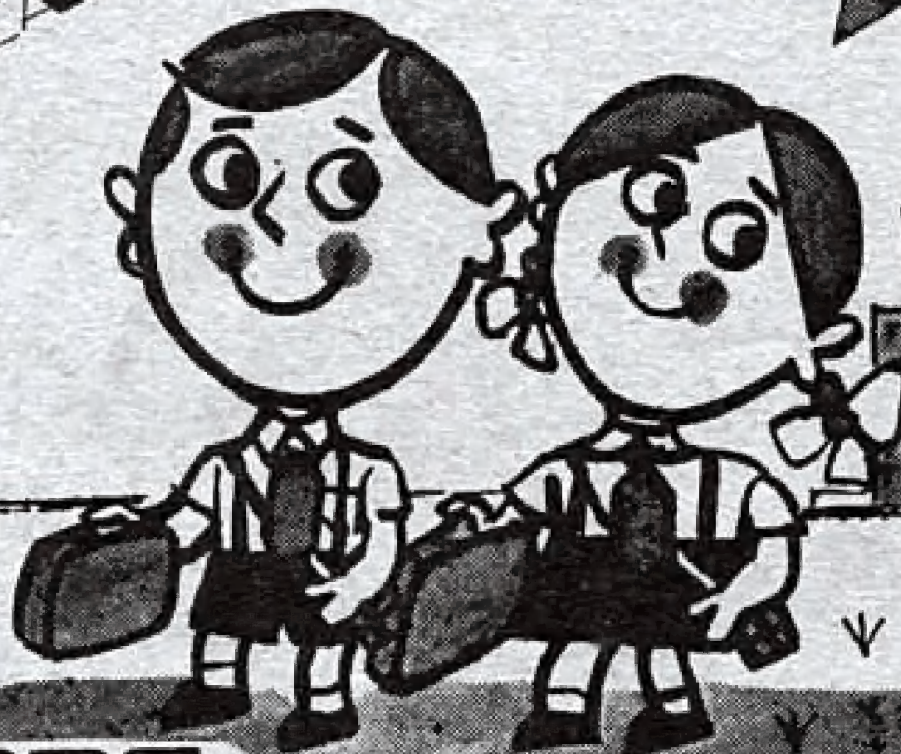
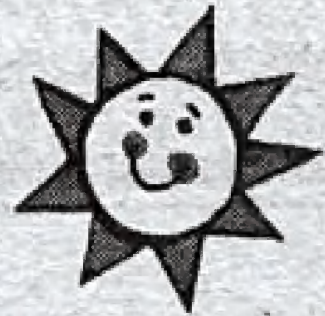


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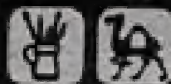
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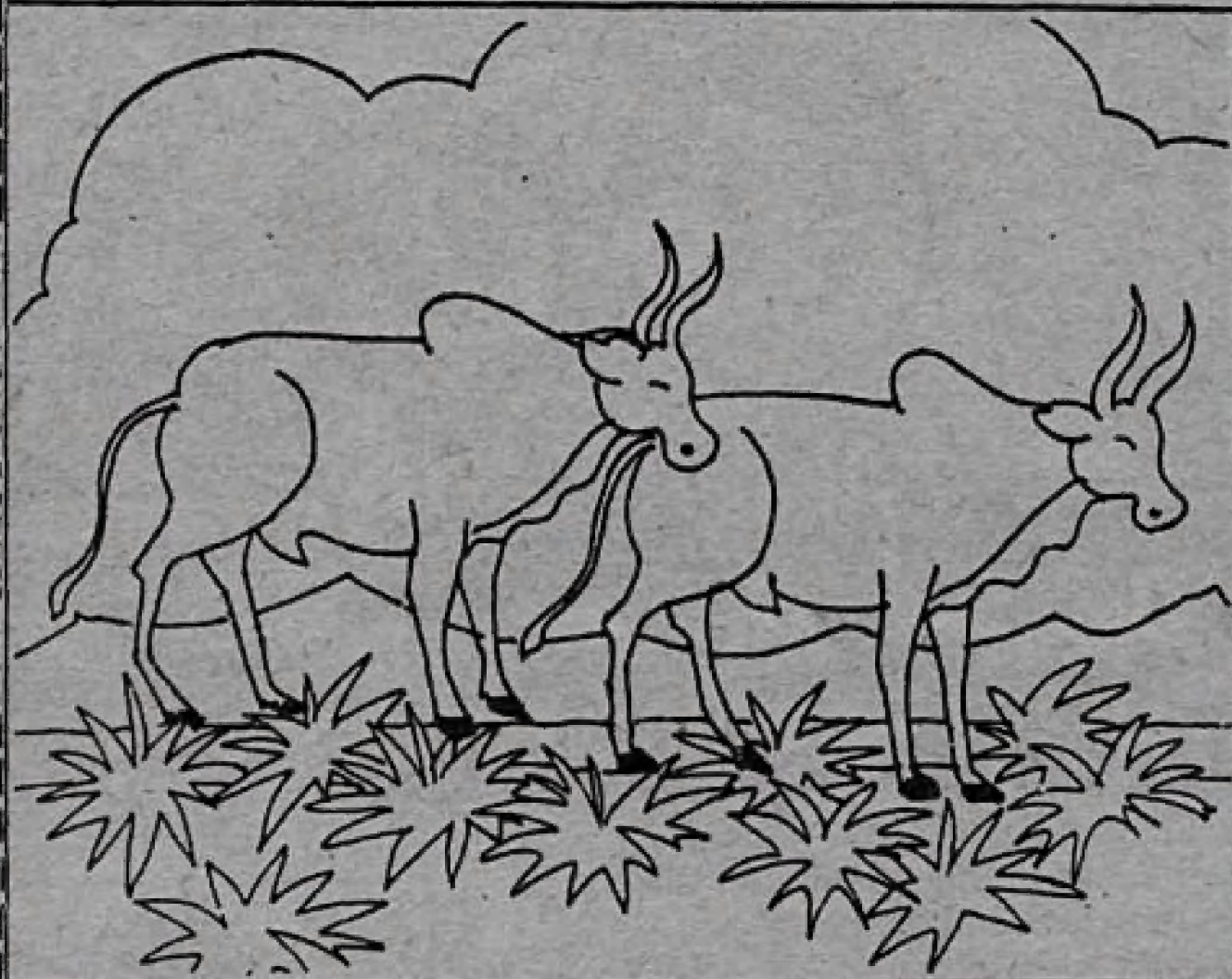
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- *Story of Krishna*
- *Ruskin Bond recounts his favourite story*
- *The Flying Frog—in Nature's Kingdom*
- *The Prince and The Pauper*
- *Rana Pratap Defies Akbar—in Story of India*
- *The Dreaded Bermuda Triangle—in the series Unsolved Mysteries*
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and More



Printed by B.V. REDDI at Prasad Process Private Ltd., and published by B. VISWANATHA REDDI for CHANDAMAMA CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND (Prop. of Chandamama Publications), 188 Arcot Road, Madras-600 026 (India)

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IN THIS ISSUE

Mythology:

Story of Krishna

... Page 11

Stories:

What makes Beasts of Men

... Page 23

Dilemma with Diamonds

... Page 27

The Long Search

... Page 33

Thanks for the Dinner

... Page 40

A Legend of Sindh

... Page 43

Queer Conduct of a Hermit

... Page 45

The Wonderful Bird

... Page 51

Too Miserly....

... Page 59

An Exchange of Joys

... Page 60

Picture Stories:

The Prince and the Pauper

... Page 36

Akbar Grows Powerful

... Page 55

Features:

A Matter of Right?

... Page 17

Secret of the Great Pyramid

... Page 19

Watch Out—There's A Leopard About!

... Page 34

AND Let us Know, Newsflash, Contests and more.



ATTENTION, CONTESTANTS

The prize for Contest A announced in our February issue is to be shared by T.S.Ashwin, Madras, and Melwyn Fernandes, Goa.

The prize for Contest B goes to T.Subbarao, Chirala. Extracts from the prize winning essays and the answers to the questionnaire are to be found elsewhere in this issue.

Readers may send their entries for both the Contests together, but they are requested to write their answers in separate sheets of paper. The answers should be in distinct handwriting when not typewritten.

GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

दत्तमिष्टं हुतं चैव तप्तानि च तपांसि च ।

वेदाः सत्यप्रतिष्ठानारतस्मात्सत्यपरो भवेत् ॥

*Dattamiṣṭam hutam caiva tāptāni ca tapāṁsi ca
Vedāḥ satyapratīṣṭhānāstasmātsatyaparo bhavet.*

Offering to others, sacrifices, rites, askesis and the Vedas — all are founded in truth. Hence we must always stick to truth.

The Ramayanam

THE BOOKS THEY LIKE MOST...

We reproduce below passages from the prize-winning entries for Contest A announced in our February issue.

T.S.Ashwin, Madras. (His Choice: The Gita)

"According to the Gita, the soul is imperishable. Only the body perishes, the soul is immortal. It is birthless and deathless. The soul changes the body as a man changes his old clothes for new ones.

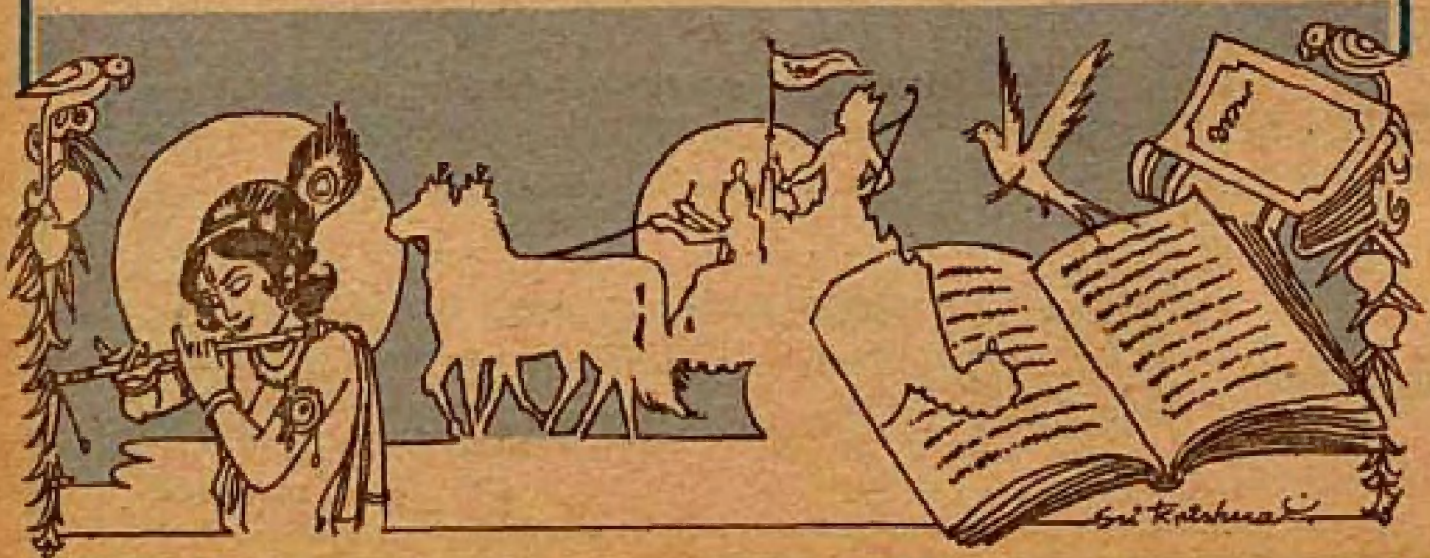
"The Gita is the pride of India. It is the respository of spiritualism. It is the essence of the Vedas and the Upanishads. It enables the world to discover its soul. India's culture is mirrored in it. It is a light-house of both spiritual light and learning. It shapes our character and its influence penetrates deep into our minds. The Gita is a rare treasure."

Melwin Fernandes, Goa (His Choice: The Mahabharata)

"The whole story is a study of human absurdities. Defeat of vice and wicked plans is the moral of the epic. The *Mahabharata* still continues to be read and sung not only by Indians but others also. This epic is really a lofty addition to the literary treasure-chest of India."

Answers to Contest B

1. From Sindhu came the Persian Indus; from Indus came Hindusthan; and later India.
2. *Brihat Katha* by Gunadhya. Based on this, Somadeva wrote his *Katha-Sarit-Sagara*.
3. *Panchatantra* by Vishnu Sharma.
4. *Savitri* by Sri Aurobindo.
5. St.Thomas.



Krishna

—By Manoj Das

(Story so far: A prophecy warns Kamsa, the tyrant of Mathura, that the eighth child of his cousin, Princess Devaki, would be his destroyer. The furious Kamsa imprisons the princess and Prince Vasudev, her consort, in his own castle. He goes on killing one after another the couple's children as soon as they are born. However, when the eighth child, a son, is born, all the inmates and guards of the castle are put to a deep sleep by Goddess Mahamaya, who asks Vasudev to carry his son to the palace of King Nanda and exchange him with Nanda's new-born daughter.)

4. THE GREAT EXCHANGE

Vasudev was about to step out of his room. But, "Please stop!" said Devaki, "Let me have another glimpse of my child!"

She came closer to Vasudev. The golden bluish light the goddess Mahamaya radiated a moment ago had faded out: But as the couple strained their eyes to look at their son, the child

dazzled like a star. The darkness and desolation of the night gave them an experience the like of which they had never known. Wonder and delight overwhelmed them for they saw in the smiling child a splendour that was indescribable—his four tiny hands holding the symbols of Vishnu—*Shanka* (Conch) *Chakra* (Wheel) *Gada*



(Mace and *Padma* (Lotus).

But the vision disappeared. The child looked human, though for his beauty he was nonpareil.

Upon recovering his speech, Vosudev said, "Now I know who our child is. He is none other than the incarnation of Vishnu, born in response to ardent prayers from his devotees."

How much I wish what we saw now was permanent!" said Devaki.

"That ought not to be. The Lord comes down in human form so that he can be one with the mortals and show them the light by which they can become

one with Him. He rejoices in forgetting Himself and yet carrying on the mission for which he comes," explained Vosudev.

"I do not understand all that you say. But on second thought I too should wish that my son did not look very much different from other children. If he did, Kamsa will find him out," said Devaki.

"Right you are. Well, there is no time to lose. I must hasten to my friend Nanda's house."

Devaki kissed the child and took her hands off it. Vosudev stepped out, the child held close to his bosom.

A strong gale had ripped through the castle putting out all



the lamps. The giant-guards lay sprawled here and there. Some of them shrieked in response to the howls of wind or the whips of rain. But that is about all they could do. They took no notice of Vosudev who passed through them as before him the castle-doors banged open one after another.

All was dark outside. Huge rolls of cloud clashed against one another. Like a fast pair of scissors, lightning went on cutting the darkness into shreds and thunder-claps shook the earth.

Vosudev hardly looked anywhere save at the child's face which he could clearly see because of the bluish golden aura round it. He did not know when he had begun to plod through the river Yamuna.

The river was in spate and the flow was swift. Vosudev, of course, was strong enough to withstand the current, but he had to halt when the water touched his arms and the waves surged up to flick the child.

Only then, looking around, Vosudev realised that it was raining rather heavily. He was surprised that the rain did not drench him or the child. Next moment, upon looking up, his



surprise was changed into joy and greatfulness. He saw the great monarch of the serpents, Vasuki, following him with his multi-hooded head raised to protect the god-child from the rains.

"If Providence has so ordained that even rain cannot touch the child, how can the river do any harm to it?" Vosudev asked himself and he resumed walking.

Indeed, the river Yamuna meant no harm. She just desired to tickle the child!

Vosudev crossed the river without any difficulty. The rain subsided and Vasuki retired.



The village Gopa, the seat of Prince Nanda, was not far. As Vosudev approached the village, he wondered what he would say if someone challenged him to disclose his identity or if someone demanded to know why must he travel alone at that unearthly hour carrying a child.

But yet another surprise awaited him. He soon realised that the power of Mahamaya had put to sleep not only the people of Mathura but also those of Gopa.

All was quiet. The moon, shining through a chink in the clouds, showed Nanda's house

like a phantom castle.

Vosudev entered the palace and did not stop till he was inside Queen Yasoda's bed-chamber.

Two bejewelled stands with a dozen lighted lamps each stood at the head of the queen's bedstead. Around it, on the floor, lay asleep her maids.

And the queen too was blissfully asleep. The only one to remain wide awake was her infant daughter. Playfully she moved her tiny legs and hands, and her charming eyes twinkled as if she was expecting visitors.

A gust of wind made the flames of the lamps sway in a rhythm. Vosudev who stood bewitched gazing once at the child in his arms and once at the child on Queen Yasoda's bed, totally forgetful of the situation, woke up to his mission.

Slowly he laid his son by the queen's side and still more cautiously took her daughter to his arms. "My sister!" he said in an inaudible whisper, "I'm leaving my son in the safety of your love, but I do not know what is your daughter's fate. Pardon me my action, for I am only doing as directed by the Divine Mother."

Stealing a last glimpse of his

son, Vosudev, holding Nanda's child close to his bosom, hurried out of the palace.

* * * * *

Morning broke out and along with it the cry of a new-born baby from Devaki's apartment. All the inmates and guards of the palace had just woken up, totally ignorant of the events at night.

Some of the guards raced with one another for reaching Kamsa's chamber.

"My lord! Princess Devaki is delivered of her eighth issue!" they announced with great excitement.

Kamsa sprang to his feet. He spoke no word, but his eyes gave out sparks of wrath. Gnashing his teeth and goggling his eyes he stormed into Devaki's room.

"My brother!" cried out Devaki and at once she fell prostrate clutching at his feet. "It is a daughter. What trouble can it cause you? Your wrath has consumed all—all my innocent children. Won't you spare this one — the only one from whom I could derive some zest for living?"

Tears in his eyes, Vosudev added, "My dear Kamsa, I promise we will retire with our



daughter into a forest faraway. Or, should you so desire, you can marry our daughter to one of your sons so that she remains yours forever. Think what a sin you will earn by killing an infant girl!"

Kamsa laughed. "Vosudev! Have I not sinned enough by killing your other children? How much difference is it going to make with one more? If I am to spare your eighth child, the very foe of mine according to the prophecy, was I not a fool to kill the others?"

Kamsa's heartless yell convinced Vosudev that pleading with him would be futile. He fell silent. But Devaki still clung on

to the tyrant's feet.

"Leave me!" yelled Kamsa again and he kicked her off his way. His hairy hands shaking fearfully, he lifted the child.

Vosudev stood benumbed and Devaki swooned away. Hurriedly Kamsa went out. In one bound he reached the inner courtyard where lay the dreaded stone. As usual, he began to swing the child above his head in a circle to gather force for dashing it to its death.

But lo and behold, he had only swung half the circle when the child slipped away—away into the bright blue sky of a fresh dawn. As Kamsa looked

upward, startled, he saw a golden streak of light dissolving in the blue.

And at once a resounding voice shook the castle and shook Kamsa to the marrow of his spine: "Know this, O cruel demon, that the one born to destroy you is safely growing up elsewhere!"

Kamsa stood speechless for long, unable to comprehend the course of events. The infant that disappeared—who was none other than Mahamaya Herself born with the sole purpose of taking place of Devaki's eighth issue—left him as undone as a man who had suddenly lost his arms!





What was that row about in the public library? I could hear it from our balcony. If I'm not mistaken, your sweet voice, temporarily turned hoarse, also contributed to it!" observed Grandpa Chowdhury.

Rajesh was a bit embarrassed. "I'm sorry, but it all began with the librarian's arrogance. He resented the way Ratan dressed," said Rajesh.

"Who is Ratan? What was wrong with his dress?"

"Ratan is senior to me by three years. He should be in the college the next year. He came to the library in an underwear and banian. The librarian asked

Towards a Brighter Personality

A MATTER OF RIGHT

him to leave and come back wearing a dhoti or vastram or trousers or shorts and a shirt. Ratan retorted saying that he would read books with his eyes and not with his clothes! The librarian got annoyed and then a quarrel broke out."

"Which was the lucky party to receive your support?"

"Ratan, naturally! There is no law forbidding one to visit the public library in an underwear! To dress as one likes is one's fundamental right!" Rajesh replied enthusiastically.

"Hm!"

Rajesh was not satisfied with Mr. Chowdhury's utterly brief response.

"Of course I was right, grandpa, wasn't I?"

"Before I answer your question, will you please answer two of my questions? Tell me, will it be an ideal society where people will do a thing only when compelled by law?"

"Nn—no!"

"Secondly, do you know that

there is a law against a grown up person going without clothes?"

"Ye—yes!"

"Well, don't you think that if a total absence of clothes was indecent, clothing insufficiently or whimsically can be near-indecent? You cannot expect law to set down all the do's and don'ts of life."

"But by dressing in the way one likes one does not harm others!"

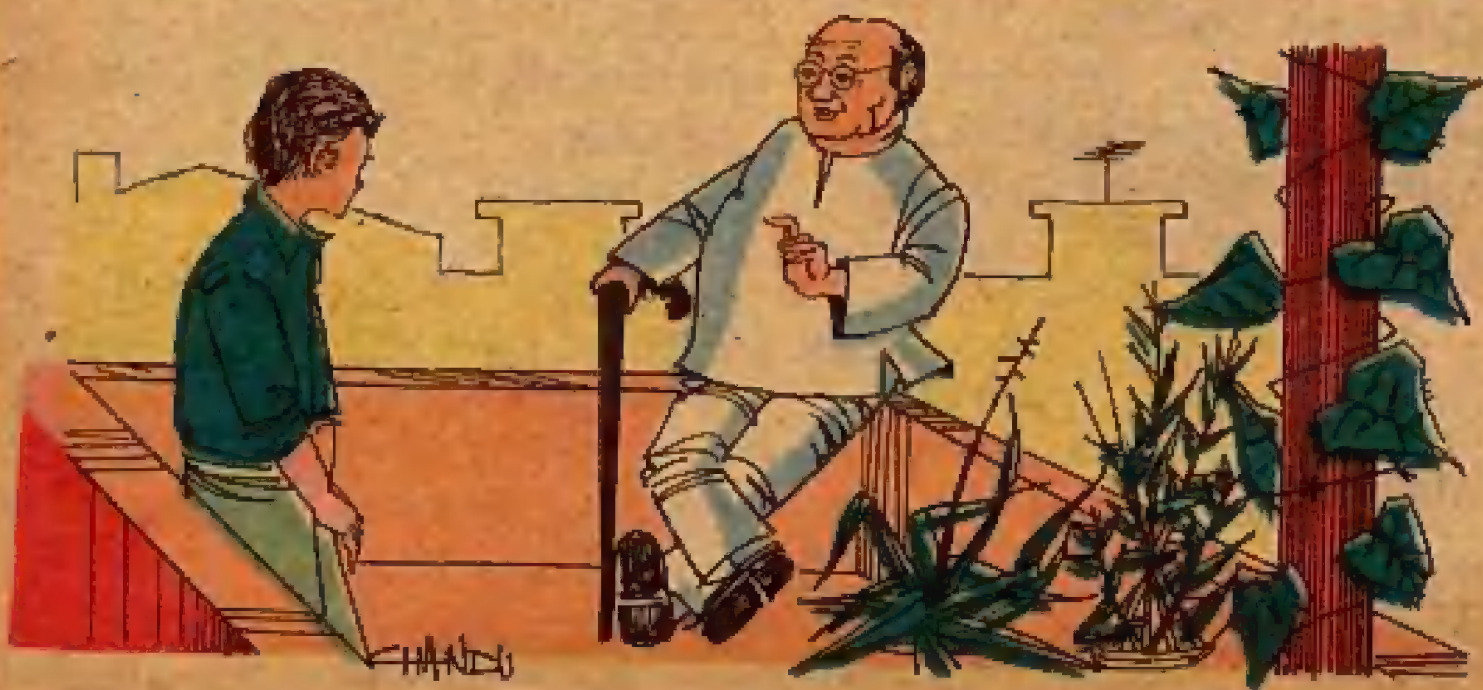
"One does; not physically, but one harms others' sentiments. It is a show of disrespect to the library as an institution as well as to those who are present there to visit it in an underwear. This means you take a very casual view of the place and the people, if not a contemptuous one. Nobody will mind your

dressing poorly or simply, but nobody will excuse your dressing impudently."

"Is it good to be much conscious of dress?"

"It is not. As Hazlitt said, 'Those who make their dress a principal part of themselves, will, in general, become of no more value than their dress.' You cannot say that your friend was not conscious of dress. Had that been so, he would have gone back home when pointed out his lapse and returned properly dressed. Behind dressing gaudily and behind going about in an underwear, the motive is the same—to show off!"

Rajesh smiled. Mr. Chowdhury also smiled. He knew that Rajesh had understood the point.



SECRET OF THE GREAT PYRAMID

To the southwest of Cairo, on a rocky plateau of Gizeh on the brink of the primeval desert, Sahara, stand three great monuments, the pyramids.

The largest and the oldest of them, known as the Great Pyramid, is also the greatest single building ever made by man. That was built about 4500 years ago.

As is well-known, the pyramids were the tombs of the Pharaohs—the mighty kings of old Egypt. They were looked

upon as demi-gods and the people spared no pains to build for them monuments that defied time.

The Great Pyramid, built over an area of 53 Sq. Km., could contain within it gigantic institutions such as St. Peter's Cathedral of Rome, the Cathedrals of Florence and Milan, Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral all grouped together, and still have some surplus space!

The geometric and scientific calculations that have gone into





the making of the Great Pyramid are staggeringly intricate. 2.3 million rectangular blocks of limestone—some of them weighing up to 15 tons—had gone into its making “and were fitted together with the precision of a necklace clasp.”

But that is another matter. For ages it was believed that the Great Pyramid contained the mummy of Pharaoh Cheops or Khufu. Also, it was traditionally believed that a huge quantity of wealth had been deposited inside the monument, for the King might need them on his journey across the world of mortals to that of the immortals.

Many might have wistfully thought of laying their hands on the wealth buried in the pyramid. It was natural for many to think that Khufu was a great King and the quantity of wealth deposited for his sake must have been huge. Some enterprising thieves even tried to make holes into the Great Pyramid. They ended up in making a few scratches!

Then came Abdullah al-Ma'mun, the Caliph of Baghdad, in A.D. 820. He came to Egypt for spreading Islam, but to gain wealth or knowledge in the process was also his fond desire,

He came with a battalion of engineers, chemists and experts of other sorts and tried to detect if there is any hidden door leading into the interior of the monument. Every inch of the surface and the base was examined. When the Caliph was entirely satisfied that the makers of the pyramid did not mean anybody to enter it any day, he ordered his labour-force to bore a passage into it. Any success in that regard required stupendous energy, effort and patience. The Caliph had come prepared with all that.

But their instruments broke

by the dozens. The experts then smeared the stones with vinegar and heated them with fire. The stones cracked. Then it was relatively easy to dislodge the blocks. It disfigured the pyramid, but that the Caliph did not mind.

After digging about 30 yards into the pyramid, the Caliph's men suddenly found a passage. It was a momentous discovery for them. The Caliph was all agog with excitement.

The passage led to a chamber, supposed to be the Queen's Chamber; then to yet another chamber, the King's Chamber.

But where is the great wealth? Not even a farthing was

to be seen. What was much more intriguing, where are the mummies of the king and the queen?

The Caliph was awfully disappointed. He left Egypt forthwith.

The Caliph's discovery—rather his failure in discovering anything except the empty chambers—meant puzzle for the posterity. Why did Pharaoh Khufu make this gigantic monument if he was not to be buried in it? There was nothing to suggest that any gang could have ransacked the Great Pyramid earlier. Even if thieves had entered, they would have taken away the wealth, not the mum-



mies.

What might have happened then? Did the pyramid contain any magic in its atmosphere for dissolving the bodies of the king and the queen in course of time? That seems quite unlikely.

The next famous explorer to examine the Great Pyramid was Napoleon, in 1798. The experts he brought along gave new theories for the first time. They said that the pyramid was a record of an ancient system of measures.

Since then several experts have proposed several important theories about the speciality of the Great Pyramid. The most startling of their discover-

ies is the fact that the pyramid stands exactly at the centre of the land map of the world!

How could the ancient Egyptians have calculated this? Obviously they were great geographers and astronomers. As Alan and Sally Landsburg put it in their book *In Search of Ancient Mysteries*, "The only way the pyramid's planners could have picked its central position.... would have been to survey Earth from space, make a global map, project it flat, then draw meridians through the precise middle of the map's land surface."

The Great Pyramid remains a riddle—or the storehouse of many riddles.....





WHAT MAKES BEASTS OF MEN

In the village Gangapur lived two young men, Pratap and Bhanu. Pratap's father was the headman of the village. Pratap was quite proud of his status.

Bhanu was poor. He laboured hard for making his both ends meet. He wandered in the forest collecting rare herbs. He sold them to a manufacturer of medicines in the town. Moving about in the forest was risky, but he did not mind the risk.

Every year, during the Dusserah festival, the landlord of the area organised a contest in lathi-paly. For three consecutive years Bhanu stood first and Pratap came out second in the contest. The people of Gangapur, who were present at the festival, would go wild with excitement at the result. They would physically lift Bhanu and

make him sit on their shoulders and shout hurrah for him.

Pratap grew jealous of Bhanu. Though Bhanu never suspected it, Pratap was always on the look out for a chance to harm him.

The festival was approaching. Pratap lost the peace of his mind. Only if Bhanu disappeared from the scene, he could emerge first!

A holy man, while passing through Gangapur, decided to camp there for a few days. He was well-versed in the art of doing miracles. The headman of the village invited him to spend his days as his guest. The holy man obliged him.

This gave Pratap a chance to serve him. The holy man was pleased with him. Before his departure, he asked Pratap, "What can I do for you?"



"O *Mahatma*, please teach me the art of assuming the form of some animal or the other. Often wild beasts enter our fields and kill our cattle. I could scare them away if I could become a fearful beast myself for a while!" said Pratap.

The holy man passed a searching look on Pratap and smiled meaningfully. He brought out a dry root from his bag and cut it into three pieces.

"Take these. Each time you throw a piece into your mouth and think of a certain beast, you will be changed into that beast. The moment you would wish to get back your human form,

you'll become yourself. These three pieces will give you such opportunities three times," said the holy man.

Pratap was delighted. He can fulfil his desire even if he were to become a beast even once!

Next day Pratap observed Bhanu entering the forest. He followed him. Then hiding behind a bush he threw a piece of the magic root into his mouth and wished to change into a bear.

He became a bear at once. He waited for Bhanu. He would pounce upon Bhanu when he is on his way back home.

Two hours passed. He heard someone telling another in a suppressed tone, "Don't move further. There is a bear hiding behind the bush. I'll throw my net presently and capture it!"

Pratap looked with panic and saw Bhanu with Jaisingh, a renowned hunter. Jaisingh captured animals and sold them to the royal zoo.

Pratap began to run. Bhanu and Jaisingh pursued him. Pratap took a turn and changed into man.

"Pratap, did you see a bear?" asked Bhanu.

"No," replied Pratap. Bhanu and the hunter were surprised.

They looked in all directions and went away.

Pratap was not sorry for his failure. He had two other chances, after all. Next day he changed into a wild buffalo and waited for Bhanu. But before he had seen Bhanu, a tiger saw him.

The tiger charged at him. Pratap ran for his life. Before the tiger could catch him he changed into man and climbed a tree. The tiger clawed at the tree for some time and left the spot.

After a long time Pratap came down and went home.

Now that only one chance was left, Pratap was anxious to achieve his goal somehow or the other. He could not sleep a wink at night. As soon as morning broke out he went into the forest and waited for Bhanu.

Soon Bhanu was there. Pratap changed into a tiger and made a dash towards him. Bhanu, taken aback, ran at great speed.

There was an old pond in the forest. Bhanu reached its brink and stopped. He hesitated to enter it for he knew how muddy it was.

Pratap leaped upon him, but missed him and fell into the



pond. He was caught in the glue-like mud. Bhanu resumed running.

The more Pratap struggled to come out of the mud, the more he plunged in it. He became sure that he was drowning. He changed into man and shouted for Bhanu.

Bhanu stopped and looked back. Great was his surprise when he saw Pratap in place of the tiger. However, he rushed back and drew Pratap out of the mud.

"What is the matter, Pratap? What made you a tiger? And why were you pursuing me?" Bhanu asked.



Panting and sweating, Pratap fell at Bhanu's feet and confessed to the mischief he had in mind.

Bhanu had a shock, but he got over it and said, "This is a lesson for all of us. We must

learn how jealousy makes beasts of men!"

Pratap shed tears of shame. Bhanu hugged him and said in a soft tone, "Let's forget about it. We were friends and we will remain friends."

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



DILEMMA WITH DIAMONDS

—By Randor Guy

King Parakram kept the empty gold tumbler of milk on the low sandalwood table before him, and wiped his mouth with a silk napkin that was on a gold plate. Sidhanta smiled at the king and bowed to him twice before the king waved him to a wide chair with ivory arm-rests.

Parakram stared for a long moment at his wise minister and then smiled.

"Wise friend, you wonder why I summoned you at this late

hour after sunset. I know you will miss the game of chess you play with yourself! I have a reason, Sidhanta... I have, but you will never guess the purpose of your visit here!"

"Your Majesty, Sidhanta is ever at your service, night or day. Command me and it shall be done. My chess game can wait!" Sidhanta smiled again.

"Sidhanta, will you have some fresh milk?"

"I am most thankful, but I should not have it before my





evening prayers, Your Majesty."

"Good. Now, let me tell you, we have a guest in our palace guest-house, rather an unusual guest. He is from the neighbouring kingdom, Vidarbha. His name is Vajra, a man who sells diamonds and other valuable stones. He is in deep anguish, Sidhanta."

"Your Majesty, may I know the cause of his anguish?"

"Sidhanta, it is a challenge even for you! His problem is peculiar and rather puzzling!"

"Gracious King, I love challenges. Please do tell me all about our guest Vajra."

And King Parakram began to tell:

"The merchant, Vajra, who carried on regular commerce in jewellery with some of the merchants in our kingdom, sent one of his lieutenants to Mallipuram. The assistant was on his way to our town. But he never reached his destination. His dead body was found under a tree. His horse was standing nearby. On inquiry it was not difficult to find out who he was. His master, Vajra, was duly informed. He reached yesterday and was aghast to see that the bag containing diamonds which his assistant was carrying was missing! No wonder that he should suspect foul play! He thinks his assistant was murdered and the bag stolen. But our physicians who examined the corpse assert that the fellow died out of a sudden heart-attack. I believe our physicians, but how to explain the loss of the bag? Did someone take it away after the man died? If that is so, the thief must be brought to book!"

"Noble king, a challenging case indeed!" Sidhanta said patting his beard. His mind began to race thinking about the peculiar problem set before him.

However, he had to find a solution. It is a question of the prestige of Mallipuram!

"Your Majesty, may I see Vajra?"

"You may, Sidhanta. Vajra rests in my visitors' chamber. In fact, he awaits you! Your fame has spread beyond our land."

"Thank you, my King. I shall meet Vajra and try to help him. There is little that the human mind cannot unravel! I shall see you later, my lord."

Sidhanta bowed and walked out with a spring in his steps which belied his age!

Vajra sat in a cushioned chair, his eyes closed and he sat up when Sidhanta cleared his

throat with vigour! He bowed to the wise minister and went into a long speech about his great loss. Sidhanta heard him, nodding now and then. At last Sidhanta spoke, "Vajra, may I see the horse on which your assistant was travelling? And what happened to his coat and shoes?"

"The horse is here. So are his coat and shoes. I must give them back to his children," said Vajra.

They were soon produced before Sidhanta.

Sidhanta gazed at the magnificent horse for a while. Sidhanta who had a way with birds and animals ran his fingers over the





ing the smile of victory! I can recognise it. Have you found out anything? Please do tell me. Any hope of my bag being recovered?"

"Vajra, all in good time. Be patient. Now, leave me alone."

Mayura Lake was a beautiful part of Mallipuram. It was surrounded by thick woods filled with deer, bison, and birds of many a variety. On its bank there was a rest house built by Parakram for the benefit of the public, and weary travellers. Sidhanta stood on the bank, and pressed his foot into the soft earth. Then he walked away towards the rest-house. The man in-charge welcomed him and handed over the bunch of keys at Sidhanta's request.

Sidhanta moved from room to room at the spacious rest house. He gazed at the beds, pillows and bed-linen and in one room, he stood for a while. His hand moved into his beard and then he smiled. Quickly he shut the door and moved towards the bed.

King Parakram, Vajra and Sidhanta sat in a private chamber. Vajra smiled with sheer delight, for in his lap rested the

animal and tickled it softly when the horse raised its legs!. Quickly he bent low and stared hard at its hoofs. He rose, sporting a smile.

"Vajra, can you now show me the coat and the shoes your assistant had put on?"

"Yes, wise Minister, I shall bring them. They are safe, but not my jewellery."

Moments later Vajra brought them to Sidhanta. Sidhanta examined them with great attention. The neck of the coat held his attention for a few moments. He smiled and picked up something fluffy, white and light!

"Wise Sidhanta, I see you smile

leather bag with the invaluable goods!

"Sidhanta, tell us how you found out the bag for our friend!"

"Your Majesty, the horse of Vajra's assistant gave me the first clue."

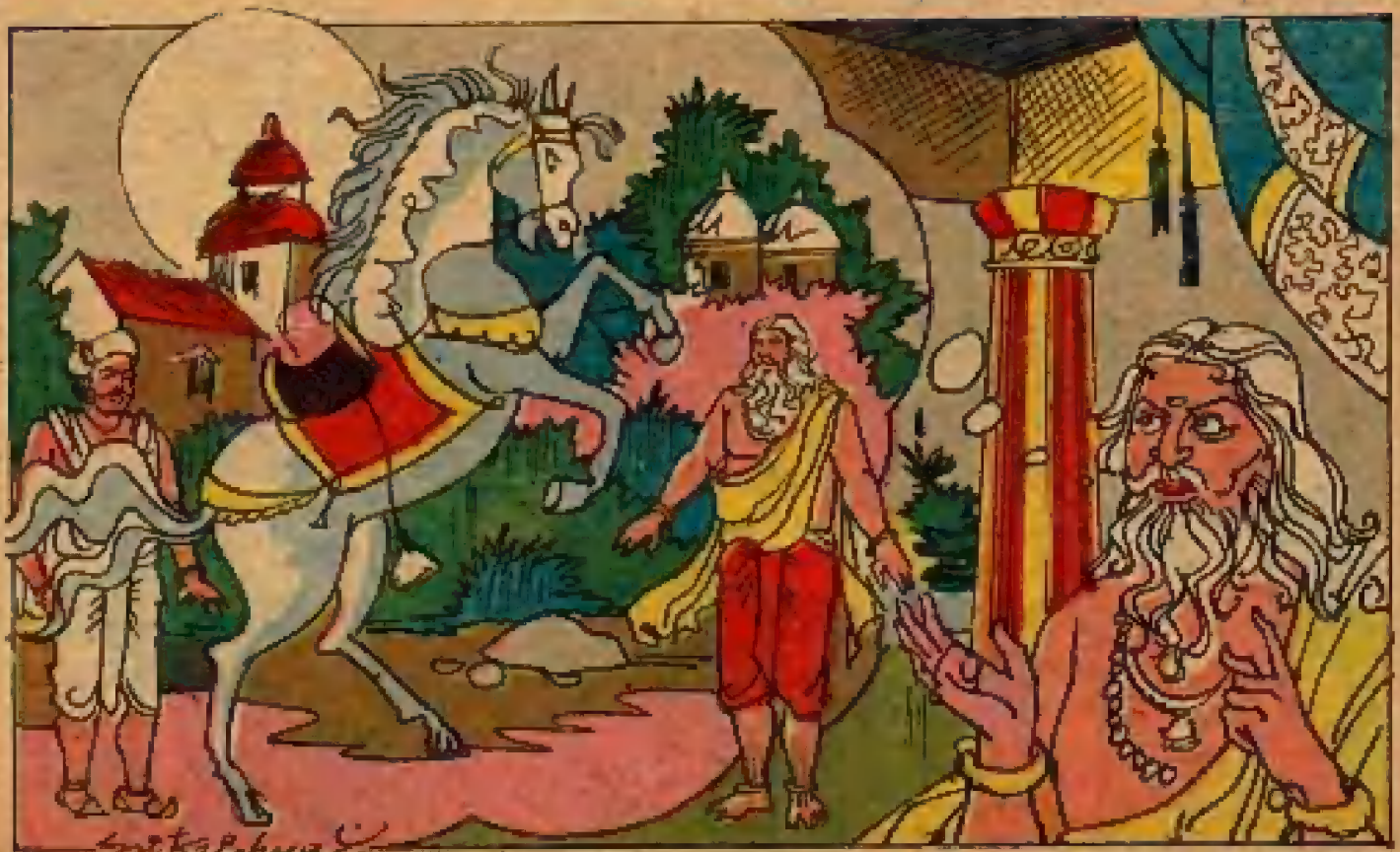
"The horse? It can't talk!" Vajra exclaimed.

"Train your powers of observation and you will learn a lot in this world, Vajra. When I fondled the horse, did you notice that it raised its legs? I noticed reddish clay sticking to its hoofs. That kind of clay or soil is found at the Mayura Lake in Mallipuram. Our artisans use the red soil to make clay toys. So I knew

that your assistant had gone to the lake. There is our rest house open for the public and I found the same red soil under the shoes of your assistant. He had probably stood or walked near the lake!"

"May be. But it is amazing how you...."

"Vajra, listen to me with patience. When I examined the coat I found something fluffy sticking to it. It was swansdown from swans. We use them for making beds and pillows. It is so soft and it helps to sleep well. Our rest house beds are filled with swansdown. Your assistant had gone there for rest but how did he get swansdown in his coat? I



wondered. Then an idea occurred to me vaguely and I visited the rooms. In our kingdom the rest houses, for that matter everything, are kept in perfect order. So I wondered how the swansdown could come out of a bed or pillow and stick to his dress. Then it struck me as a cautious man carrying diamonds he probably looked for a safe place to hide the valuables at the rest house! I examined all the beds and pillows in every room and I found that pillow. I felt it.... it was heavy... and I saw evidence of it being ripped and restitched by a man who was no tailor! That is, you assistant! Scared of thieves he had thought it fit to hide the things in his pillow. He ripped it open and stuffed all inside. Naturally the swansdown inside the pillow would have come out and a bit of it stuck to his coat during the

act of stuffing! Then he left the place, most probably forgetting all about the hidden treasure, and died on the way. The pillow was there safe, waiting for me to find it! So that's how it was... the red clay.... the swansdown.... the ripped pillow.... and it all led me to your property! Vajra, we have no thieves in Mallipuram and there was no need for your assistant to rip open a pillow!" Sidhanta laughed.

Vajra gazed at Sidhanta with wonder and bowed many a time in sheer gratitude. He offered him some diamonds, but Sidhanta politely refused the gift.

"Vajra, I have only done my duty to my king and to a guest of our kingdom," Sidhanta said.

Parakram smiled at his wise minister.



THE LONG SEARCH

A young man was travelling to a distant land. He was looking forward to meeting a sage. He desired to learn from him a great secret.

He sailed by a ship and it took him three years to reach the land of his destination.

At the harbour he hired a horse-carriage and reached the village of the sage in a fortnight. But on arrival he learnt that the sage who was suffering from fever had been carried to a town for treatment. The traveller reached the town the next-day only to learn that the sage had died the previous evening.

He wailed and beat his fist on his forehead, crying out, "What a pity that I should miss him just by a night and miss the chance to know the secret!"

The sage's son took him aside and asked him, "What is the secret you desired to learn from my father?"

"I was told that he knew of a medicine that could cure all diseases!" replied the traveller.

The sage's son forgot that he was in mourning. He laughed and laughed.

"Why do you laugh?" asked the surprised traveller.

"You are such a fool that I hesitate to answer your question! Had my father known such a medicine, do you think he would have died of a fever?"

The traveller stopped wailing on that account, but bemoaned his fate that had brought him all the way for nothing!



WATCH OUT- THERE'S A LEOPARD ABOUT

When a hungry leopard is on the prowl the safest thing to do is stay out of its way!

An uproar broke out in the House of Commons in 1910. Members of Parliament sprang to their feet angrily demanding to know what steps were being taken to end the activities of an especially dangerous overseas menace. Lives were being lost in Panar, India, at an alarming rate, people were awfully frightened and there were even suggestions that specially selected Army sharpshooters should be dispatched to suppress the terror. (In those days India was under the British rule.)

Political upheaval? Rebellion? Military invasion? The fear was caused by none of these but, astounding as it may sound, by one leopard.

Over a period of a few years, its victims had numbered hundreds; its cunning and ferocity were so dreadful that many Indians were convinced it was supernatural. Even some of the boldest hunters in the country were too alarmed to approach the task of killing the beast.

When night fell, people barricaded themselves in their homes and hoped that they would be safe—for this leopard meant business. It had scratched the roofs off homes and burrowed beneath the sides of houses to get at its intended prey, and once it had spent a whole night attempting to claw down a door.

Eventually, Colonel Jim Corbett, one of the most famous hunters of all time, undertook to find and kill the Panar man-eater. He succeeded, but it took him over six months. He was almost killed in the process and, while he hunted it, the leopard claimed many more victims.

Many hunters believe that the leopard is the most frightening enemy of all. Its cunning and

daring are said to be uncanny and it can conceal itself in places impossible even for a tiger. It has a highly developed sense of self-preservation and it can approach and disappear more stealthily than any other animal.

To be fair to the leopard, however, it must be said that it is usually very frightened of men. It will usually race away at man's approach. More often than not, it will keep out of men's way. But when cornered, wounded or when it turns man-eater, it is devilish. Even with a broken back, a leopard has been known to kill a man who has come too close to it, intending to make sure that it was dead.

In Africa, the leopard is found from the Mediterranean to the Cape. In Asia, it has a greater range than the tiger, stretching from Asia Minor to China, and from Southern Siberia to the Indonesian archipelago.

On average it weighs between 45 and 70 kilos, can move with devastating speed and has incredible strength.

What exactly turns the leopard into a man-eater?

In India and Africa there exists the custom of depositing the dead in the bush. The true Indian custom is to burn the dead, but occasionally in times of pestilence or famine—which, alas, are all too common there—human corpses are left to the wild creatures. And this, most probably, is where the leopard acquires its taste for



human flesh.

Melodramatic as it may sound, it is true to say that, once it becomes a man-eater, the leopard stalks with great cunning and attacks with unparalleled ferocity. It also attacks with caution.

Leopards which have not acquired a taste for human flesh rarely attack men unless provoked, but they are always dangerous to children.

The leopard is an expert climber of trees,

nocturnal in habit and preys upon antelopes, goats, dogs and monkeys. In India, the leopard is commonly called the panther, the name leopard being usually restricted to the cheetah, which belongs to a different genus.

Exactly how many people are killed today by leopards is not known, but their number cannot be great. Many more have been wounded, because a leopard which may not be man-eating will attack when cornered.



"The Prince and the Pauper"



Tom Canty, a beggar boy, and Edward, Prince of Wales, look alike and have changed places. Edward is now in the care of Miles Hendon, an impoverished gentleman.

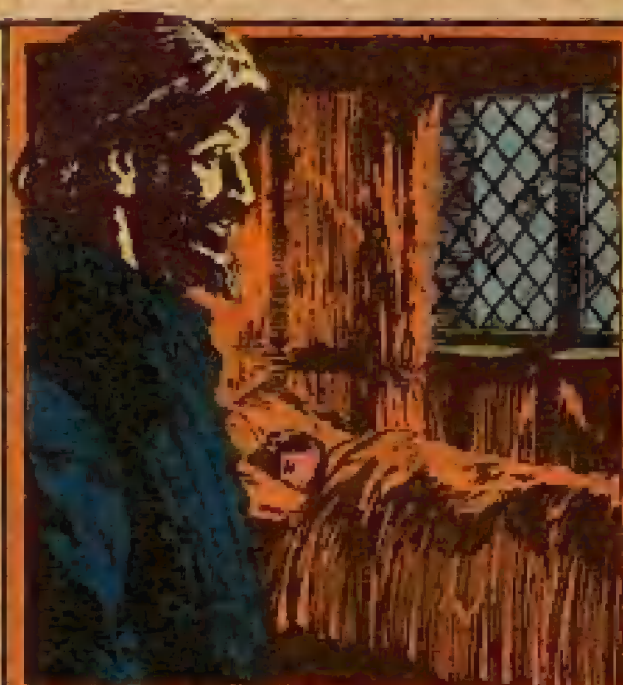
"The King is dead!" The tidings struck a chill to the heart of the Prince, as Miles Hendon, taking advantage of the situation, bore him swiftly away. Why, he thought, now I am King. Unaware of his companion's thoughts, Hendon led the boy to London Bridge.



As Hendon led the Prince towards his lodgings in a little inn on the Bridge, they suddenly found their path barred by a rough-looking man. It was Tom's father, John Canty. "Thou shalt not escape me again," he snarled at the Prince. "Perhaps if I pound thy bones to a pudding, thou wilt learn a lesson thou shalt not forget in a hurry!"

"If thou but touches him, thou animated offal, I will slit thee like a goose." Canty drew back before the sword pointed at his breast. "I have the right," he growled. "I am his father." Hendon said, "I care not. Thou art clearly not fit to have any child under thy care. Therefore, from this day on, the boy is under my protection."





John Canty moved off muttering threats and curses. Hendon then led the young king to his apartment, where the boy dragged himself to the bed and lay down exhausted. "Prthee call me when the table is spread," he muttered drowsily before falling into a deep sleep. Hendon smiled as he looked down at the sleeping boy. "He calls himself the Prince of Wales, and clearly dreams of living in palaces. No matter. I will care for his malady, and in time he will come to accept this humble abode as his home."

Later that day, the foreign ambassadors came, and Tom, now enthroned, received them. The splendour of the scene delighted his eye and fired his imagination at first, but the audience was long and dreary, and he was cordially glad when the ceremony ended.



While Edward slept in Miles' humble abode, Tom Canty was standing in the Guildhall, where he had been taken upon the death of the king. Bewildered, he heard the gathered assembly solemnly pronounce: "The king is dead. Long live the king!"



Much of Tom's time was spent in this manner, and by the time several days had passed he was getting a little used to his circumstances. When a banquet was held in his honour, he was able to eat a good dinner, even though he was conscious that scores of eyes followed every morsel to his mouth.



But let us return to the vanished true king. The morning following his rescue of Edward from the hands of Tom Canty's father, Miles went off to buy the lad a second-hand suit of clothing. When he returned, it was to find the boy gone. From one of the servants of the inn where his lodgings were, he learned that a youth had arrived, saying that he was a messenger from Miles, and that Edward had gone off with him. Brushing the servant aside, Miles rushed out into the street.



Cursing himself for leaving the boy alone, Miles wormed his way swiftly through the noisy multitude. Then, suddenly realising the hopelessness of his task, he stopped in his tracks. "That scurvy villain that claimed the lad as his son has the boy in his clutches again," he thought. "But I'll find him one day—even if I have to ransack the whole land for him!"

Meanwhile, the youth was leading the king a crooked course through Southwark and into the high road beyond. Presently they came to the charred remains of a farmhouse and near them a barn which was falling into decay. From it emerged the figure of John Canty. "I am here to see Miles Hendon," the king said angrily. "Who art thou who keeps crossing my path?" "Thy father, of course, thou dolt!" Canty said. "Who else?"





"How couldst thou be my father?" Edward asked. "I am the king! And where is Miles Hendon?" John Canty replied in a stern and measured voice. "It's plain thou art mad. But I need thy service. Take him to the barn, Hugo!"

Edward was bundled into the barn, where he was left with the door barred on him. Puzzled and frightened though he was by this latest turn of events, his thoughts were mainly for his benefactor, Miles Hendon, whose name had been used to lure him to this place. "He will think I have deserted him," he thought miserably. "Such seeming ingratitude will wound him deeply."



As the day wasted away, the lad, wearied with his travels, gradually sank into a healing slumber. After a considerable time, he awoke to the sound of voices. A grim and unsightly picture met his eyes as he opened them. The barn was now filled with a motley company of tattered and evil-looking ruffians.



THANKS FOR THE DINNER

On the outskirts of a town lived a certain man whose father and forefathers had been rich. By the young man's time the family had run into bad days.

However, the young man was alone and he received some little money from a tenant who occupied a small hut that belonged to his family. Apart from his own ancestral house, that hut was the only property left with him.

He did not spend the rent he received from his tenant. He put it in a stone jar and buried it beside an unused well in a cor-

ner of his compound. His house was not safe for storing anything valuable because even its doors and windows had been sold away or taken away by creditors.

A vagabond lived nearby. He pretended to be the young man's well-wisher. His motive was to find out where he keeps his money. And at last, after spying upon him for many days, the vagabond found out where he buried his money.

One night, while the young man was asleep, the vagabond dug out the jar. He went home and counted the coins. There



were sixty ducats. He was happy.

Next day the young man went to deposit in the jar a sum of twenty ducats he had received as a year's rent. But he found the jar missing. He was shocked. Then he began to think who could have stolen it. Readily the vagabond's face came to his vision. He remembered how he had seen the vagabond keenly observing his movements. He felt certain that none other than that fellow was the thief.

The vagabond naturally decided to behave in an unsuspecting manner. He was on his way to meet the young man to exchange pleasantries with him.

Through his window the young man saw him coming. He pretended not to have seen him. He sat with his back towards his door and spread those twenty ducats before himself and went on muttering as if he was thinking aloud: "I've sixty ducats in the jar. Here are twenty more. Tonight I'll put these in the jar. That will make the amount eighty!"

The vagabond, entering the door silently, heard what the young man said. But he pretended not to have heard anything. At his sight the young



man hurriedly removed the coins and spoke to him, as usual, courteously.

The temptation to lay his hands on twenty more ducats proved too strong for the vagabond to resist. He decided to put back the jar at its place so that the young man will deposit the money in it at night. He can then steal the jar again the next night.

But how to put back the jar in broad daylight? There was of course nobody in the compound to take note of his activity except the young man. If the young man remains out of the compound for a while, he can

do his work.

"My brother, I have cherished a desire for long," said the vagabond.

"What is it?"

"To entertain you to a dinner at the nearest tavern. Will you be free for it tonight?"

"How can I refuse an invitation from a friend like you?" said the young man, showing great appreciation of the fellow's courtesy.

They met at the tavern at night. The vagabond ordered for a number of delicious items. When they were being prepared, he whispered to his guest, "I've left my purse at home. Allow me to go. I should be back in no time."

The guest nodded. The vagabond went home and carried the stolen jar to the well-side and buried it. Then he returned to the tavern.

They enjoyed the dinner. Both were very happy—for different reasons.

The young man continued to be happy, for he dug out his jar and hid it elsewhere. The vagabond's happiness continued only till the next night. He went to the spot and tried to find the jar—heavier by twenty ducats.

But he heard a giggle. Behind him stood the youngman. "Thanks for the dinner!" he said.

The vagabond took to his heels. He never came anywhere near the young man again.



My Favourite Story

A LEGEND OF SINDH

— By Krishna Kripalani



I was born in Sindh which is now part of Pakistan. But whatever be its political position now, Sindh was and will always be remembered as the main gateway to India and as a great treasure-house of India's most ancient lore, Mohen-jo-daro.

It was Sindh on the river Sindhu (meaning ocean), which seemed to foreigners as vast as an ocean, that gave its name to Hindu religion which had no name and still has no other name except *Sanatana Dharma*.

Let me tell you a little legend of that land. In the eleventh century a certain ruler ordered all his Hindu subjects to accept

Shri Krishna Kripalani, one of the leading intellectuals of India, had been the organising Secretary of the All India Congress Committee during the crucial years 1946—1948 (when India won freedom) and was the Secretary of the Sahitya Akademi (India's national academy of letters) during 1954—1971. At the moment he is the Chairman of the National Book Trust, India. This versatile author narrates an old legend that is little known outside Sindh.

his religion or face death. His capital was Thatta, a prosperous town on the river. The king gave his subjects eight days to make up their minds. The poor subjects, not knowing what to do, went to the river-bank and prayed to the river-god to save them. A voice came out of the water: "Do not fear. Within eight days I shall be born among you and will save you." Immediately a strange sight appeared—a beautiful child lying on a *pala* fish (Indus Ilish) and swinging on the waves. This was Udero Lal—because it was raised up on the water; it also became known as Jhule Lal, because it was swinging.

Within eight days the child of

the prophecy was born to the wife of the leader of the community who was endearingly known as Devki Mata. Within minutes of its birth, it grew into a man and then into a handsome old man with a flowing white beard.

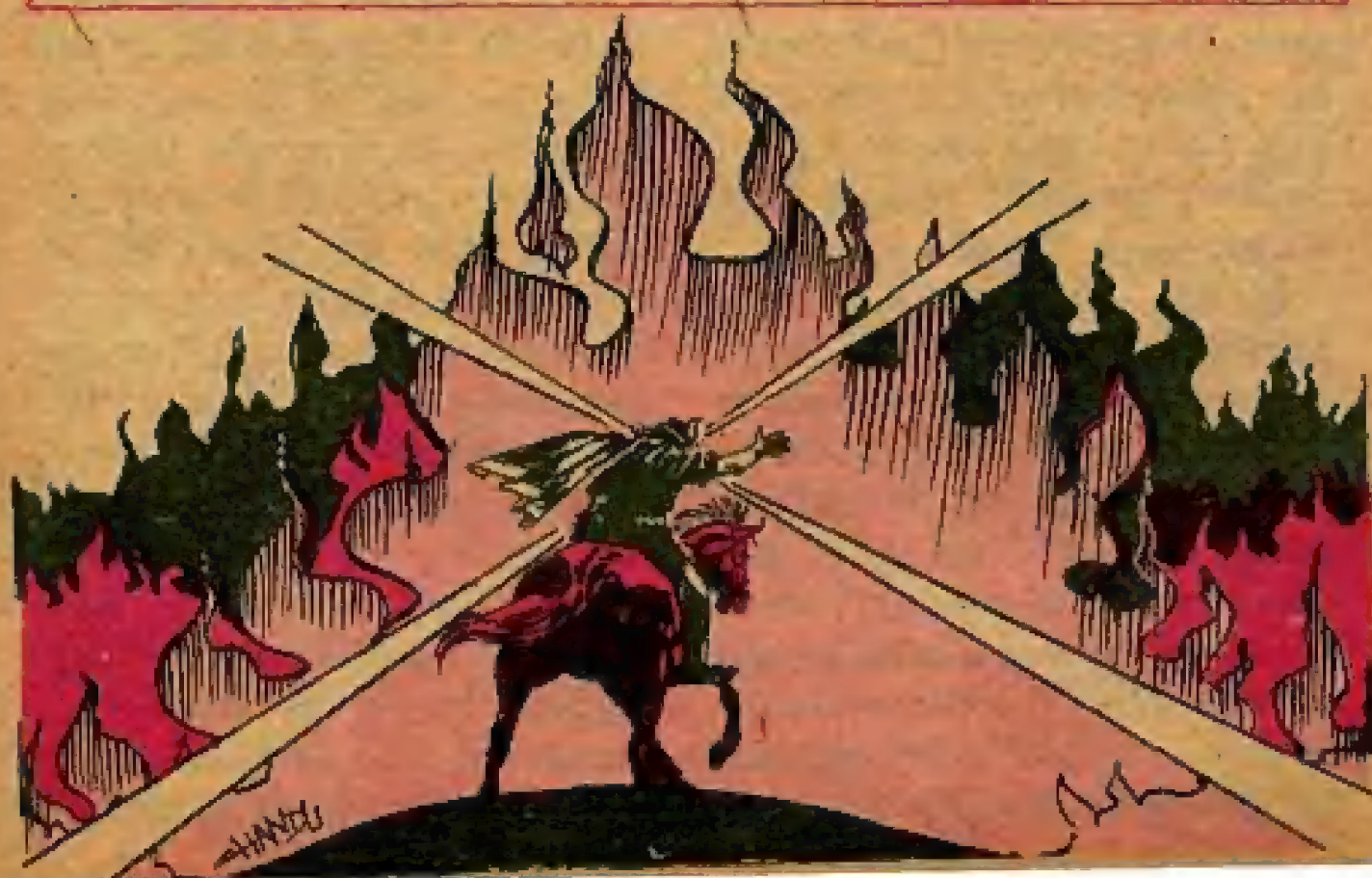
When the king heard of this miracle, he sent for the old man. The old man, Udero Lal, went to the court riding on a horse, followed by a regiment of armed warriors that came out of the water.

But Udero Lal asked them to remain behind and rode alone to the court. The king asked him to persuade all the people to accept his faith. Udero Lal re-

plied: "People of all the religions are equally dear to God and should live like brothers."

The king was angry and he ordered a forcible conversion of the subjects. Suddenly Udero Lal ordered *Agni*.—the Fire—to destroy the town.

Today both Hindus and Muslims of Sindh worship Udero Lal as the national deity and observe ceremonies in his honour. They are very much like those celebrated elsewhere in honour of Durga during the Dusserah festival. The Sindhi festival is known as *Cheti-Chand* and takes place on the Sindhi New Year day in March-April when the river is in flood.





New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire

QUEER CONDUCT OF A HERMIT

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Between roars of thunder were heard moaning of jackals and eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying astride on his shoulder, the Vampire that possessed the corpse observed, "O King, I'm afraid, you have undertaken this strenuous work at this unearthly hour at the behest of a tantrik or a hermit. Well, you ought to remember that often their ideas run contrary to the ideas of men in the society. Let me give you an instance. Pay



The king divided his kingdom into several divisions. Each division was placed under a governor appointed by him.

The northern division of the kingdom, Haritnagar, was governed by an officer who was inefficient and corrupt. To add to the anguish of the people, a young man called Durjay became a menace to them. He was related to the queen. That is why the officials of the king feared him. The governor of Haritnagar himself did everything to remain in his good books.

Durjay did whatever he wanted to do. He had built up a gang of rowdies around him. They tyrannised over people and exploited them in many ways. This went on for a few years.

Some people of Haritnagar gathered enough courage to report the situation to the king's chief minister. The minister sent his spies to the northern division. They returned and said that what the minister had heard was correct.

The minister knew that it will not be easy to stop Durjay's activities. The fellow enjoyed the queen's protection. But if a strong and honest governor was

attention to my narration. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: "In the olden days Ratnapuri was a prosperous kingdom. Rajgiri was its capital.

Not far from the capital there was a forest. A sage named Sahajananda lived in his hermitage on one side of the forest.

Sahajananda was viewed with great respect by all—the king as well as the commoners. The members of the nobility went to consult him on their personal problems. The ministers too consulted him on problems of the state. He gave sound advice to all.

sent to Haritnagar, he can tackle the situation. In case of a quarrel between the new governor and Durjay, the King would order an enquiry and no doubt Durjay's mischiefs would then come to his notice.

Among the young officers of the court one was Pratap. He was as just as he was fearless. The minister told the king that the northern division of the kingdom needed an efficient governor and that Pratap should best suit the need. The king approved of the proposal. Order was issued to Pratap to proceed to Haritnagar and take charge of the office from the old

governor.

Pratap was very unhappy about it. He had been born and brought up at Rajgiri and he loved the place very much. He was surprised that the minister who was his well-wisher should have decided to send him to a distant place. He of course did not know the reasons for the minister's decision.

But Pratap had no other go than to act according to the royal order. Riding a chariot he set out for the headquarters of the northern division, all the while sulking about the transfer. A number of soldiers accompanied him.





He had to pass by the forest. He took a detour and went to the hermitage of Sahajananda.

The serene atmosphere of the hermitage and the peace of the forest overwhelmed him. He was already feeling disgusted with his transfer. Now, with the touch of peace he got, he thought of resigning his job and passing his days in the hermitage.

He met Sahajananda who bowed to him and said, "Swamiji, I have lost all interest in my career. I'll like to be here in your hermitage for the rest of my life."

The hermit said very sternly,

"No, Pratap, you are not meant for this sort of life at the moment. Go and discharge your duty as faithfully as you can."

Pratap sighed. Then he got up and resumed his journey.

The very next day, on his way to the capital, Durjay stopped at the hermitage and told Sahajananda, "Swamiji! I shall send a team of masons and an architect tomorrow. They will construct a marble room for you just on that spring. In summer you can relax there."

"No, you need not do any such thing. I've no need for any cool abode in the summer," said Sahajananda.

"Swamiji! Is it not unkind of you to refuse my offer? Should I not be given a chance to serve you?" asked Durjay.

Sahajananda fixed his gaze on Durjay. "Are you sure you wish to serve me?" he asked.

"Swamiji, I'm absolutely sure of what I say!" replied Durjay.

"In that case you ought not to decide how to serve me. It is for me to decide how I should utilise your services," said Sahajananda.

"Why don't you kindly decide, Swamiji? My services are yours—in whatever way you might utilise them," said

Durjay.

"Good. I want you to be here—in the hermitage—for a full year from today!" said Sahajananda.

Durjay kept quiet.

"Ready?" demanded Swamiji.

"Well, Swamiji, I'm ready, if that is the way you think I can serve you," Durjay said haltingly.

"Very well. Do not have any second thought about it. Continue to be here."

Sahajananda allocated a hut to Durjay and gave him some work. Durjay stayed on.

The vampire pused for a moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone: "O King, is not the conduct of Sahajananda queer? How could he decide to keep a rowdy like Durjay in his hermitage when he rejected the plea of a good man like Pratap? Should we not conclude that the old sage was losing the balance of his mind? Answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck!"

Forthwith replied King Vikram: "It is evident that Sahajananda was not an ascetic,



though he was a sage. An ascetic is one who has nothing to do with the society. But Sahajananda advised the ministers on problems of state. That means welfare of the people was one of his concerns. As a far-sighted sage he knew that Pratap's disgust with his own career was a temporary mood. Pratap was an able administrator and his services were required in the northern division. That is why Sahajananda advised him to continue in his duty. On the other hand, by detaining Durjay in the hermitage he made it easy for Pratap to do his work. Without Durjay the rowdies would not

THE WONDERFUL BIRD

In a certain forest lived a hundred parakeet birds. Their king was a wise bird who led them to new areas of the forest. They flew about during the day, merrily, and in the evening settled down in their nests in a huge tree.

One evening they came back to their tree as usual and descended on it making a few circles over it. But no sooner had they settled down than a hundred shrill cries were heard. Each one had got stuck in its nest—and was crying for help.

"What happened to us? What

sort of disease is this?" they asked their king.

"This is no disease. Someone pasted glue in our nests so that we cannot fly away. He wishes to catch us alive," replied the king parakeet from his nest on the top-branch of the tree.

"What are we to do?" they asked again.

"If you try to free yourselves, you'll only damage your wings. Remain quiet. Most probably the fellow who has done this will return in the morning. Pretend to be dead when he finds you. He will then throw us one by





but exclaimed with disappointment, "Why, this one is dead!"

He threw it on the ground. There was a soft thud.

One after another he picked up all the birds and threw them on the ground. They lay still, all the while counting the thuds.

At last the young man reached the uppermost branch. The king parakeet's nest was there.

When he was picking up the king parakeet, a light branch broke and fell on the ground with a thud. The ninety-nine birds counted that sound as the hundredth thud and all of them at once took to their wings.

The young man's surprise knew no bounds. He looked on as the birds made a hasty flight to another part of the forest.

He then looked at the king parakeet and said, "So! I have been tricked. Even this one in my hands only pretends to be dead, but not really dead. Very well, I will presently see to it that it is dead."

"Wait, young man, wait a moment. If you kill me, you will get very little flesh. But if you let me live, you will gain much, I assure you," said the bird.

"Will you not escape from me?"

one on the ground. Continue to lie still. When you have heard hundred thuds, know that all have been thrown on the ground. At once all of us should take to our wings," said the king parakeet.

The birds passed the night in great anxiety. When dawn broke out, they saw a young man coming towards the tree.

The young man climbed the tree mumbling to himself, "I'm sure none of the parakeets could have escaped. I'll sell some in the market and shall eat the flesh of some!"

Mumbling and whistling, he picked up a bird from its nest,

"The sale has done you good. Soon you will see how it will do me good!" the bird said while taking leave of the young man.

The rider who bought the bird was none other than the king in disguise. The bird was given a pride of place in his court. When the king was tired, or when he had an important visitor, he looked at the bird. The bird sang out. The song worked like a tonic for its listeners.

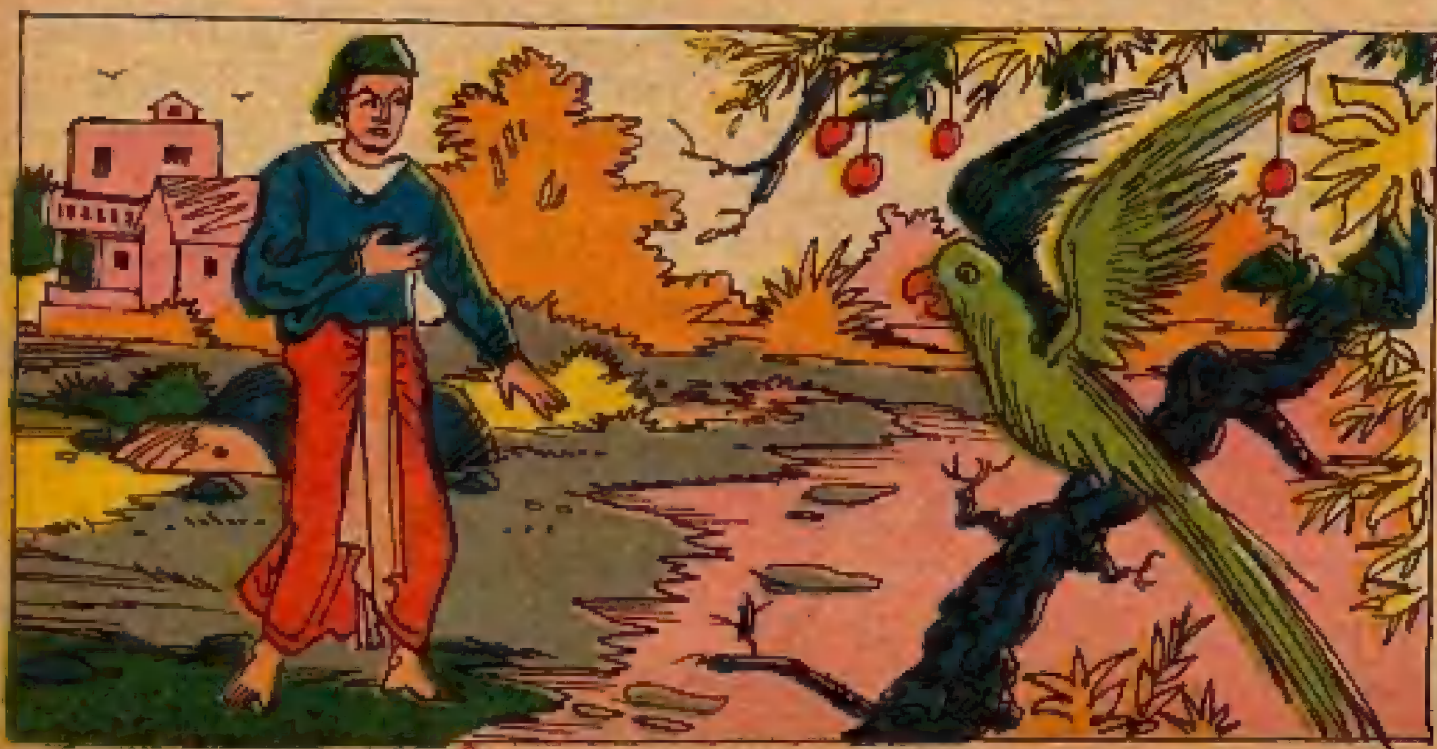
The king was very happy. A year passed.

One morning, the palace servant who looked after the bird found the bird lying dead in the cage. Tears in his eyes, he ran to the king and informed him of the mishap. The king and all the others felt very sad about it.

The king himself carried the bird into the garden where it was to be buried. But as soon as he set it down on a slab of stone, it flew away at great speed and disappeared.

The young man was now quite rich. He was coming out of his newly built house when he heard the bird addressing him from a tree. "Look here, how your selling me away did me good. I got my freedom. I could not have got this as long as I was with you, for I promised not to escape from you! You and the king treated me very well. But no happiness equals freedom."

The king parakeet made a circle and flew away in search of his ninety-nine subjects.



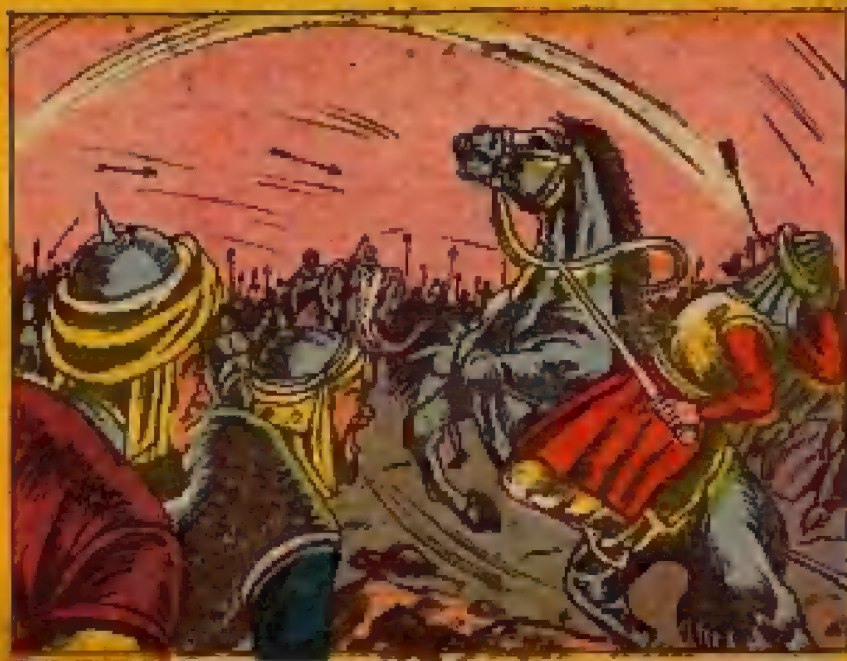


STORY OF INDIA—76

AKBAR GROWS POWERFUL

When Humayun died, his son Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar was in Punjab. He was only fourteen years of age. Immediately a coronation was arranged for him and Humayun's friend Bairam Khan became his guardian.

Immediate problems awaited Akbar. Himu, the powerful general of the scions of Sher Shah conquered Delhi and Agra. Akbar and Himu, the ambitious rivals, met on the battlefield of Panipat. The event is famous as the 2nd Panipat War.



Before Himu's large army and tactics, defeat was almost certain for Akbar. But, as luck would have it, the brave Himu was struck by an arrow. As he fell from his horse, his soldiers were heart-broken. The course of the war changed in Akbar's favour and soon victory was his.



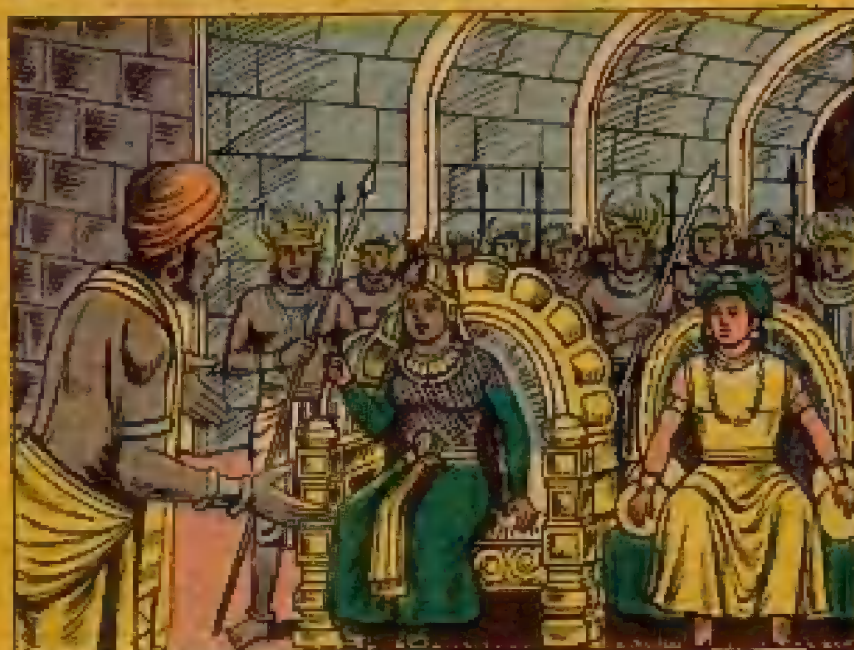
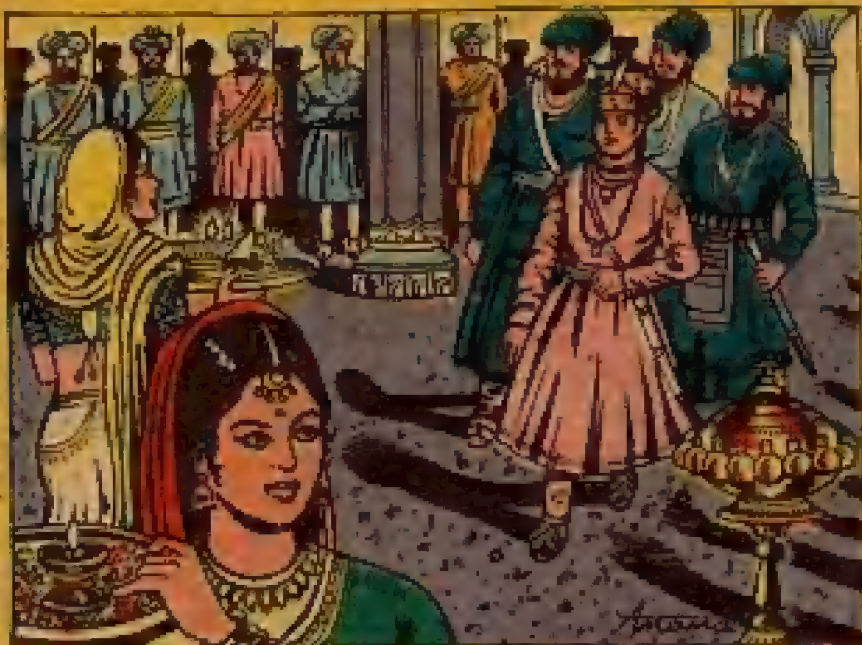
Himu was taken prisoner. He was produced before Akbar. Bairam Khan asked Akbar to behead the enemy. Akbar declined to kill a helpless man. Bairam Khan snatched his sword and cut off Himu's head himself.

Soon difference of temperament between Bairam Khan and Akbar became conspicuous. Bairam Khan wanted to dominate Akbar, but Akbar, in a sudden move, stripped him of his powers. Bairam Khan revolted, but was captured. Akbar allowed him to proceed to Mecca.



Bairam Khan was on his way to Mecca. But he had many enemies. One of them, an Afghan, was waiting in ambush. He sprang up before Bairam Khan and stabbed him to death. Bairam Khan's escorts returned to Akbar.

Victory in the 2nd Panipat War brought great fame to Akbar. Instead of becoming proud, he tried to consolidate his position through friendship with the powerful Rajput princes. He married the daughter of the ruler of Jaipur, Bihari Malla, whose grandson, Mansingh, became his lieutenant.



But Akbar was ambitious and he was keen on expanding his territory. His attention went to the peaceful kingdom of Gondwana, ruled by the noble queen Durgavati. She had lost her husband and was ruling on behalf of her young son, Vir Narayan.

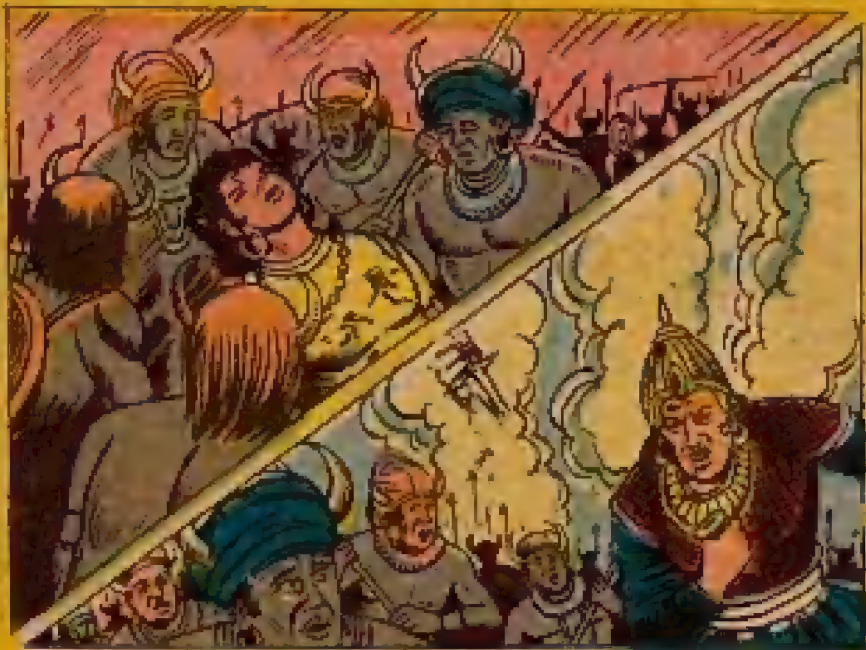
Akbar sent his ruthless general, Asaf Khan, to conquer Gondwana. The attack was sudden and unprovoked. There was no time for Rani Durgavati to prepare for proper defence. However, her army was at once alerted.





Rani Durgavati led her army herself and gave a valiant fight to the invaders numbering 50 thousand! Her teen-age son, Prince Vir Narayan, fought bravely too. Asaf Khan concentrated on wounding or killing the prince.

Asaf Khan managed to corner the prince who was struck by two arrows. The Rani rushed to her son's side and sent him to her castle, half of her soldiers accompanying him. This weakened her side. She foresaw defeat and stabbed herself to death.



The young prince, Vir Narayan, though wounded, took her mother's place and provided leadership to his army. It was an unequal fight. The prince could have surrendered and saved himself, but he fought till breathing his last. Asaf Khan plundered the palace.

TOO MISERLY.....

Two thieves became friends and went out on business. They watched a house at night. One was an expert climber, the other one was slow.

"Go up first. If you find that all are asleep, drop a coin through the window. On hearing its sound on the pavement, I'll climb," said the second thief.

The first thief climbed the wall and reached the upper floor and dropped a coin. But half an hour passed. The second thief did not go up. The first thief could not shout. He climbed down cautiously, spending another half hour and saw his colleague groping for something.

"What're you doing?"

"Looking for that coin!"

"But I had tied it on to a string and pulled it up after it had struck the pavement!"

Just then someone switched on the light in the house.

The thieves sighed. "We were too miserly even to be thieves!" they agreed.



AN EXCHANGE OF JOYS

A renowned musician was singing in the court of the King of Vidarbha. A large crowd of nobility, lovers of music and the king's guests listened to him. Among them was a merchant from a faraway town called Sundarpur.

At the end of the performance the king rewarded the musician with a diamond-studded gold necklace, a pair of silk *vastram*, and a purse containing a hundred gold coins.

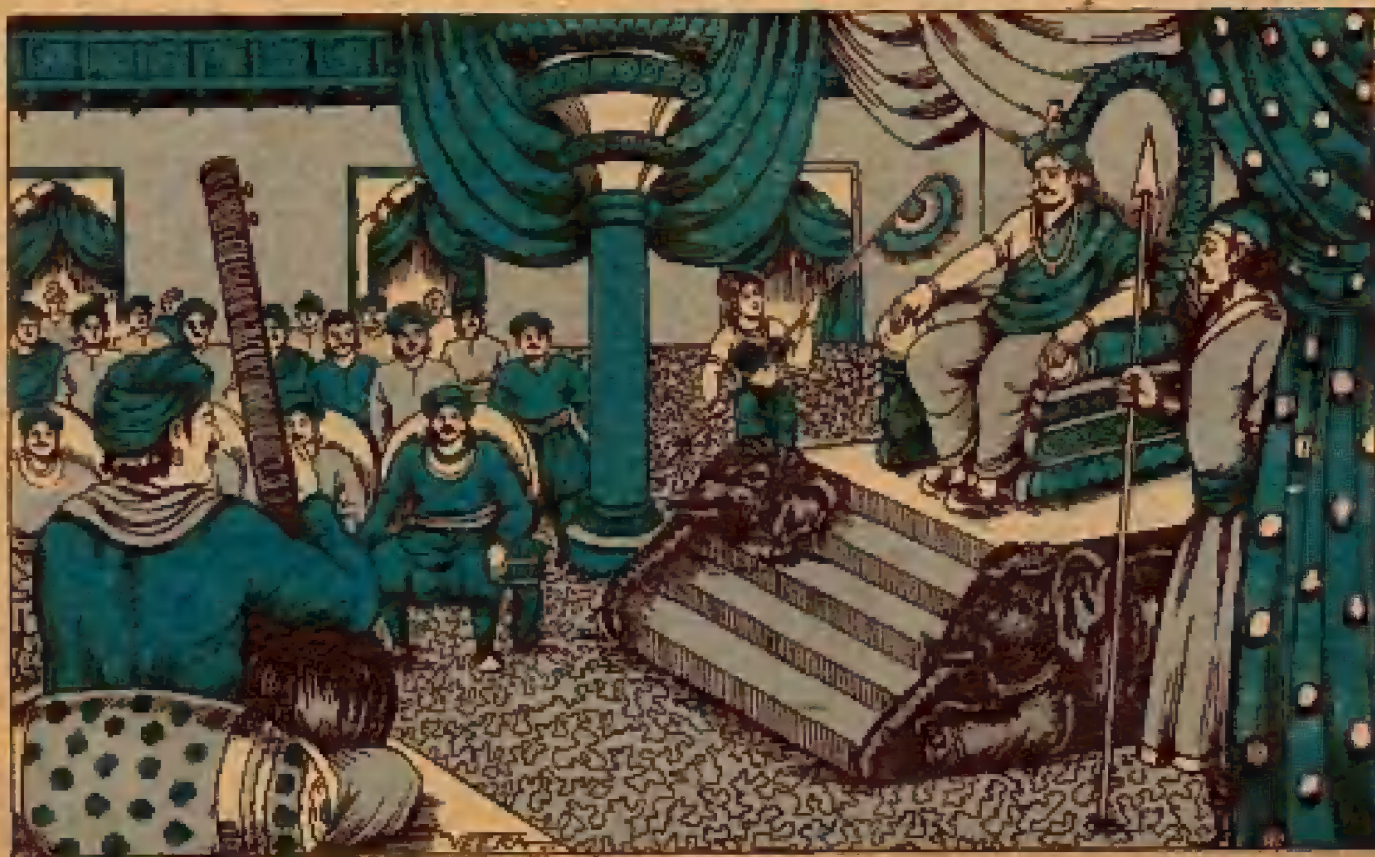
The merchant happened to

spend his night in the very guest-house in which the musician was camping.

"You sang very well. I enjoyed your singing to my heart's content," the merchant told the musician in the morning.

"Thank you. Since you enjoyed my music and you seem to be a wealthy man, should you not pay me for your entertainment?"

The merchant looked grave. "I should," he greed. "But I don't have enough money with me to



pay you. My home-town, Sundarpur, is far!"

"Sundarpur? I'm to visit the town the next week. Hope, you'll pay me there," said the musician.

"I won't be back in my town before three months. But that does not matter. I'll give a letter for my clerk. You may be pleased to hand it over to him and he will do the needful," said the merchant.

The musician was delighted. The merchant wrote a letter and gave it to him.

In due time the musician met the merchant's clerk, gave him the letter, and waited with great

expectations.

The cashier offered him thanks and a glass of water, but mentioned nothing about any payment.

After some hesitation the musician asked him to act per the letter.

"The letter asks me to thank you. I thought I had done that already. However, I don't mind thanking you once again."

"Doesn't the letter say anything about giving me some reward? I have read it twice and I bet it does!" asserted the musician.

"The letter might mean that to you, but it does not mean that



to me. You may go, sir. Thanks."

"But you are insulting your master! He will certainly take offence at your conduct!" the musician shouted at the clerk.

"I know my master better than you do," the clerk replied coolly.

"Strange!" mumbled out the musician. Quite exasperated, he left the place.

It was by chance that he met the merchant at another town. He complained to the merchant against his clerk.

The merchant heard him with patience and said, "My clerk has done no wrong. He understands

my language. I never meant him to pay you. I had given you whatever was to be given!"

"What did you give me?"

"Why? Did I not give you joy for a few days—by making you think of the reward? You gave me joy for an hour by your oral exercise. I gave you joy for a week by my oral assurance!"

The musician had no answer to this. He only grumbled, "You insulted me!"

"I was the king's guest. The king paid you heavily for your performance. By asking me for more, did you not insult the king? Why do you forget that?"

The musician kept quiet.



NEWS FLASH

Voices of All Creatures Big and Small

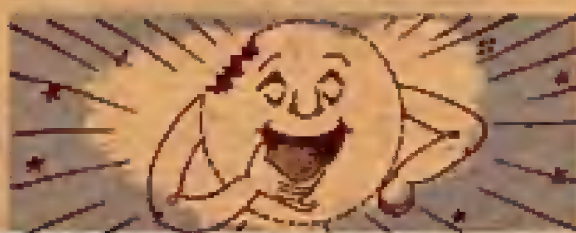
The collection of animal voices in the Biology Department of Moscow University has exceeded 3,000! Birds and beasts and insects—even ants and fish—have contributed to this unusual collection.

What is the use of these recorded voices some of which have come from New Zealand and Germany? "The collection had been found useful by doctors, who apply animal sounds for therapy with insomniacs. Nature's noises have a beneficial influence on the reflex processes in the human brain."



Is the Sun Eating Itself Up?

Research has established that the sun consumes 4.2 million tons of its own matter each second. Will it then finish itself? No, we have nothing to worry on that account. At this rate over the next 6 billion years it would have consumed only one-forty-thousandth part of itself.



A Child is born!

Is that news? Yes, at times, if he or she is a prince or a princess. But here is an exception. A child is born in a small hut in a jungle; we even do not know the names of his parents. Even then its birth is news. That is because the tribe to which it belongs, called the Onges, is feared to be getting extinct. Their number had come down to 97. Now it is 98. They live in the jungles of Little Andamans, in beehive like huts and bury their dead under the wooden platform on which they sleep. Once extremely hostile to outsiders, now they are friendly.





How does a refrigerator work?

—R. Srinivasan, Madras.

The magic of the refrigerator depends on a chemical substance called Freon, developed by Thomas Midgley.

This liquid substance flows through a closed loop of hollow tubing. We quote from *Science Digest* of November 1982: "A rather eccentric compound, this liquid refrigerant will spontaneously break into a boil at relatively low temperatures unless it's confined under very high pressure.

"If a substance is to make the transition from liquid to gas, its molecules must move considerably faster. In order to accelerate their speed, the molecules need to absorb heat from their surroundings. The refrigerator's heavy insulation prevents Freon from drawing warmth from the air surrounding the appliance. Where, then, can heat be found? In the body of the refrigerator and, significantly, in the can of soda, wedge of cheese and head of lettuce stored there. Although it never touches the refrigerator's contents, the Freon, as it circulates through its closed tubing, easily draws off heat from the warm foods that are on the shelves. After absorbing this heat, the liquid Freon travels through an evaporator unit, where the pressure is decreased. The refrigerant then boils and vaporizes, becoming a gas.

"The circulating Freon does not, however, remain in gaseous form for long. Once its molecules have absorbed as much heat as they can, the gas passes into a condenser, where it is again placed under high pressure. This change causes the Freon molecules to slow down and revert to a liquid state. As they do so, they release heat via an exhaust duct into the air around the refrigerator. The Freon then begins its circulation anew."

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PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. P.B. Prasad



Mr. Devraj Kaibekar

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs.50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for February '83 goes to
Mr. Alfred Prasad, C/o. Dr. S.R. Prasad
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The Winning Entry:— 'Seaside Games' — 'Dancing Dames'

PICKS FROM THE WISE

Good taste is better than bad taste, but bad taste is better than no taste at all.

—Arnold Bennett.

The speed of a runaway horse counts for nothing.

—Jean Cocteau

Anger is never without a reason, but seldom with a good one.

—Benjamin Franklin.



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